

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

February 11, 2015

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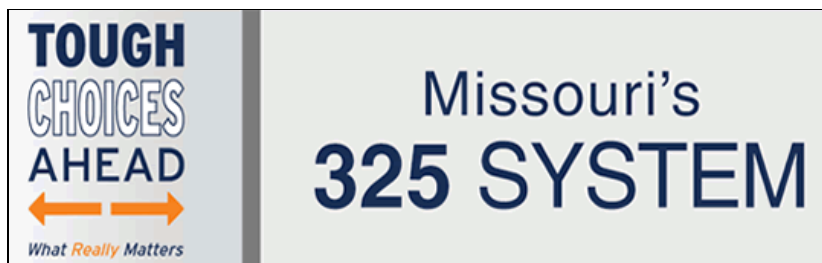
Commission Approves Road and Bridge Plan

by Robert Brendel

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission has approved a plan to work with a drastically reduced construction budget.

MoDOT unveiled the plan last month as a way to take care of Missouri's roads and bridges when its construction budget drops to \$325 million in 2017. It's a decision the Commission hoped it would never have to make and one that it's already looking to reverse.

"This action truly sets the stage to transform Missouri's transportation system and dramatically change the way we do business," said Commission Chair Stephen Miller. "After years of making great progress on the condition of Missouri's highways, we now face a future of watching our roads and bridges deteriorate."



"Missouri's 325 System" calls for MoDOT to focus its limited resources on only about 8,000 miles of Missouri's 34,000-mile state highway system. The department will use its annual construction budget to keep these primary roads in the

mostly good condition they are in today.

The remaining miles of roads and bridges will make up the state's supplementary system and will receive only limited routine maintenance. That means MoDOT crews will do the best they can to maintain roads and bridges on the supplemental system with internal resources. Work will include filling potholes, patching pavement and flushing and sealing bridge decks. It won't be enough, however, to keep supplementary roads from deteriorating over time.

"Missouri has the seventh largest highway system in the nation, but we rank 46th in revenue per mile," said MoDOT Director Dave Nichols. "This plan prioritizes what we do with that shrinking revenue, but the only way to truly change Missouri's status is to find a long-term funding solution."

While it is up to the Missouri General Assembly to determine the state's investment in transportation, MoDOT estimates another \$160 million each year in new state funds would allow the department to match all available federal funds, take care of the entire highway system in its current condition and reinstate the popular cost-share program that the Commission suspended a year ago.

Nichols said there is some interest in the Legislature to incrementally raise the state fuel tax and to index it so it can keep pace with inflation or to establish a wholesale tax on fuel.

OTHER ITEMS

Consideration of Bids for Transportation Improvements – State Design Engineer Eric Schroeter reported to the Commission the results of the January 23 bid opening. MoDOT received 85 bids on 25 calls, including seven projects with local funding. The Commission awarded all to the low bidder except for a project in the Northeast District that was deemed to have excessive bids.

State Freight Plan – Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger and Waterways and Freight Administrator Cheryl Ball reported on Missouri's first freight plan. Ball explained the plan, developed over the past year in concert with private-sector partners, "is a deeper dive into the long-range transportation plan goal of investing in projects that spur economic growth and create jobs."

The plan identifies a baseline of Missouri's freight assets, documents the link between transportation investment and economic growth and provides goals and strategies to help Missouri capitalize on its

strengths for efficient freight movement. Hassinger acknowledged, though, that the limited transportation funds available are insufficient to provide the infrastructure improvements needed to take advantage of these economic opportunities and private partnerships identified in development of the state freight plan. “What we’re really talking about,” he said, “is that instead of having a lot of great opportunities, we may be looking at opportunities lost.”

Read more on the plan here - www.mofreightplan.org.



Update: Employee Survey Teams Identify Improvement Themes

by Linda Wilson-Horn

Teams of employees are working on identifying improvements from five themes as a result of last year’s employee survey. The groups are discussing ways to make MoDOT a top workplace and improve overall morale. The five teams must have recommendations to senior management by the end of this spring. The teams are currently working on identifying issues and brainstorming ideas in each area. Employees are encouraged to contact the team leads identified below with any comments or suggestions.

Employee Development - Laurel McKean, Kansas City (EmployeeDevelopmentTeam@modot.mo.gov)

Employee development is a joint, ongoing effort on the part of an employee and employer to expand the employee’s knowledge, skills and abilities to the benefit of both the employee and the employer. The team has created a list of 10 or 12 measurable outcomes to improve employee development. They are focused on developing ideas for helping employees with advancement, engagement and helping fulfill MoDOT’s goal of a quality workforce. The group is identifying roadblocks and potential tools to ensure success. They are also looking at existing programs that could address these employee needs but just need to be communicated to employees.



One Team MoDOT - Todd Grosvenor, Fiscal Services (Todd.Grosvenor@modot.mo.gov)

The team has reviewed all the existing communication tools and feedback from employee surveys regarding issues with communication. They are also looking at benchmarks from other companies on providing good internal communications. The team is also discussing times when there is the feeling of positive and negative One Team experiences. They are focusing on our implementable strategies.

Total Compensation - Jerad Noland, Northeast (TotalCompensation@modot.mo.gov)

The team is looking for all employees to provide feedback and suggestions regarding our total compensation, including salaries, insurance, leave and other benefits. An emailed survey was sent to all employees from Jerad Nolan. Please print out the survey for employees without computers. The surveys can be emailed back to the team or mailed to Jerad via the NE district office. The deadline is Feb. 20.

Underrepresentation - Eric Curtit, Multimodal (EmployeeRepresentation@modot.mo.gov)

The team’s discussions are focused on obtaining and keeping quality employees, while also focusing on minorities and diversity. The team is currently working on topics of discussion including mentoring, communications, affinity groups and recruiting.

Use of Resources - Karen Yeomans, St. Louis (UseofResourcesTeam@modot.mo.gov)

Team members have brainstormed areas of concern with resources. One common issue identified with many areas is with inconsistency across the state. It can lead to unwise use of resources and misunderstandings. The team has consolidated items in the following categories: maintenance, STIP, technology, fleet, inventory, equipment, facilities, training, cash budget, personnel and fringe benefits. The team will be reaching out to employees as they condense these issues. They are also reviewing costs associated with them.



Cellular Stipend Program Increase

In an EAC concern submitted last fall, a MoDOT employee inquired about the current mobile stipend program and the amounts paid to recipients. Thanks to this EAC question and updates to the Office of Administration cellular contracts, MoDOT has increased the monthly stipend amounts and has added tethering. Tethering is connecting one device to another such as a tablet to a mobile phone, allowing them to use the same cellular connection. This could also be used to replace MiFi devices for field personnel.

Previously the stipend amounts were \$13 a month for voice only and \$28 a month for both voice and data. The new stipend amounts will be as follows:

- Voice and Text - \$20/month
- Voice, Text and Data - \$40/month
- Voice, Text, Data and Tethering - \$50/month



To be eligible for the mobile stipend, employees need to complete the mobile request form found at the top of the page in the [MoDOT Phonebook](#), have a business need and obtain approval. Employees would also need to allow MoDOT mobile management software to be installed. The cellular device would need to be one that is approved to work with the mobile management software and would need to be used in accordance with personnel policies. MoDOT has no liability for lost or stolen devices or personal data on a personal device.

For more details on the process, check out the [FAQ's](#). Please contact your district IS staff for question or email IS-Collaboration-MDM@modot.mo.gov.

Happy Anniversary - A Decade of Tracker

by Tammy Wallace

It's exciting to celebrate Tracker's 10th anniversary. Over the last 10 years, MoDOT has used this performance management tool to measure how well it delivers products and services to our customers. It also has made MoDOT a national leader in the area of performance management.

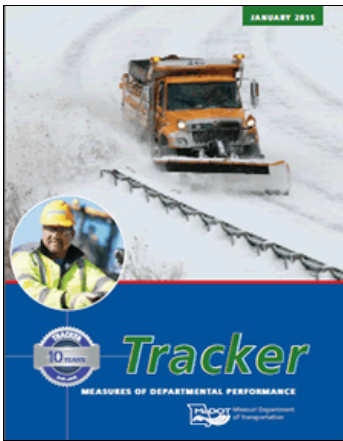
Tracker helps us focus on the progress we are making as a department and stay accountable to taxpayers. We've made amazing progress since we started tracking our performance 10 years ago with more than 100 measures. We now have reduced that number to just under 60 measures, which focus on our core activities.



Two of the most dramatic changes we’ve seen in these 10 years: our customer satisfaction jumped from 67 to 85 percent and our major highways went from 60 to 89 percent in good condition.

“As we move forward with a \$325 million budget, Tracker will be more important than ever,” said MoDOT Director Dave Nichols. “Although Tracker has helped us note progress in both the condition of our transportation system and overall customer satisfaction for the past 10 years, meeting our customer’s expectations will be a challenge as our funding drops.”

Tracker not only measures our performance on a statewide level, it also reinforces the functions and activities that are most important at a division and district level.



“As we celebrate the anniversary it’s exciting to look back at how much we’ve accomplished through the use of Tracker, and also to look ahead at how much we can continue to improve by using it,” said Machel Watkins, transportation planning director. “Tracker gives us that snapshot of how we perform through all aspects of the organization, such as keeping ourselves and our customers safe, using our resources wisely, developing transportation solutions of great value and advancing economic development.”

As this document and the efforts involved to assemble it reach the decade mark, MoDOT recognizes the effort involved to make performance management a daily part of the department’s operations and to showcase the success that came from that effort.

“As we celebrate 10 years of Tracker helping guide the direction of the department, we also want to take this opportunity to thank all the results and measurement drivers for their dedication to accountability, and to those who do a great job every quarter publishing the document,” said Nichols.

Thanks Dave!

by Stephen Miller
Chairman, Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission



View from the Chair

Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission

MoDOT Director Dave Nichols has advised the Commission of his intent to retire from MoDOT effective May 1, 2015. According to Dave, “It is time.” Dave has been eligible for retirement for several years. Two years ago, following Director Kevin Keith’s retirement, the Commission asked Dave to step up from his position as chief engineer and take on the role of director. Ever loyal and committed to MoDOT, Dave did not hesitate. As someone who naturally avoids the spotlight and is more interested in the success of the team than his own advancement, I am sure that he would have been quite happy to remain as chief engineer and support the work of another, but he responded to our call. Even though he was eligible for retirement at the time, he agreed to a two-year commitment. He has given us that and more.

There is never a good time, it seems, for a change in directors, but Dave has set MoDOT on a good course. As chief engineer and then as director he helped to oversee the downsizing of the organization. The Bolder Five-Year Direction which officially ends March 1 has resulted in savings that



Director Dave Nichols announced his retirement to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission, effective May 1.

put more than \$600 million back on the roads over the last five years. The financial crisis MoDOT now faces would have been much worse but for this effort. Given his empathy for MoDOT employees, this was a very difficult process. He has deep affection for the men and women of what he calls “Team MoDOT.”

Dave worked tirelessly to support efforts to provide new funding for transportation. He led the formulation of MoDOT’s long-range transportation plan and the “On The Move” campaign to identify needs across all modes of transportation. He understood the importance of promoting diversity within MoDOT and on MoDOT projects, offering job training and creating economic opportunities for the disadvantaged.

Read the full [View from the Chair](#) on Director Nichols service to MoDOT.

Changes in Highway Commission



Michael B. Pace has been appointed to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission. He brings experience from a distinguished military career and civil career with the Missouri State Highway Patrol to the position.

New Commissioner Michael B. Pace

Michael B. Pace was appointed to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission in January by Governor Nixon. His term will expire on March 1, 2019. He brings experience from a distinguished military career and civil career with the Missouri State Highway Patrol to the position.

Pace is a retired brigadier general in the Army National Guard who began his military career as an enlisted engineer. He served in aviation positions for almost 30 years, attaining the master aviator badge. He held multiple brigade and state-level staff positions. As the Joint Force Land Component Commander, he was in operations control commanding all Army units of the Missouri National Guard. He held command leadership positions from squad leader through command of the 35th Aviation Brigade and the 35th Engineer Brigade. During his career he received multiple decorations and badges including the Bronze Star. He retired in 2008 after completing a successful tour in Baghdad, Iraq.

While serving in the military, Pace also served nearly 33 years in the Missouri State Highway Patrol, achieving the rank of major. During his tenure, he served in increasing levels of responsibility and retired as director of the criminal investigation bureau in Jefferson City, Missouri.

Pace graduated from Tarkio College with a bachelor’s degree in personnel management, and from the United States Army War College with a master’s in strategic studies.

He currently serves on the board of directors for the MASTERS (Missouri State Troopers Emergency Relief Society), Whetstone Boys Ranch Board and serves on the Missouri State University- West Plains Chancellor’s Advisory Board. He

is also a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1828.

He and his wife Diana live in West Plains, Missouri and have two children and six grandchildren.

Bryan T. Scott Resigns from Commission

Bryan T. Scott resigned from the Commission on Feb. 1 to lead the Boeing San Antonio site as the senior site executive.



Bryan T. Scott to lead Boeing San Antonio site.

When sharing the news of his resignation with the members of the Commission, Scott commented, “This is a high functioning governance body, with support from an exemplary MODOT team. It was a real privilege to work with all of you, however brief.”

MoDOT Receives Excellent Rating on Workers’ Compensation

by Tammy Wallace

MoDOT has received an excellent rating for our management of injuries and workers’ compensation costs from an industry leader.

The National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI) is responsible for gathering data, analyzing industry trends and preparing insurance rate and loss cost recommendations.

Using their experience modifier to determine how well organizations are managing injuries, worker compensation payouts and assessing future risks, NCCI assigns a rating for each organization. Their standard rating is 1.0 and is an average for the industry. 1.0 is considered a “good” rating.

For 2014, MoDOT received a rating of .74, well below NCCI’s national standard rating of 1.0, and the lowest rating MoDOT has received. We have been making good progress and trending down the last few years. In 2008, our rating was 1.11

Receiving these ratings well below the national average shows we are doing a good job managing injuries and containing workers’ compensation costs.

“I thank all employees who are practicing safe work habits, and all of the district and central office risk and benefits management staff for their hard work,” said Jeff Padgett, director of risk and benefits management.

“Of course, this doesn’t mean we can lessen our focus on safety and doing everything we can to prevent on-the-job injuries. We must continue to make a conscious effort to working safely every day.”

Ratings are based on data from three previous year and categorize jobs titles from high risk to low risk for injury. The rating is for both MoDOT and the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

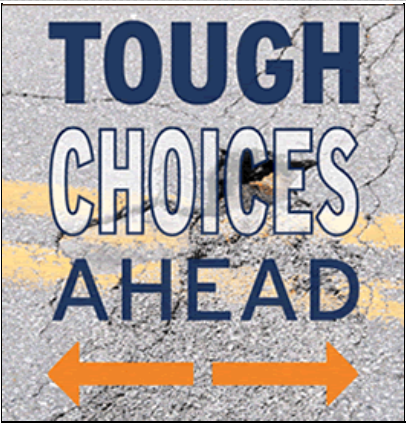


Tough Choices Ahead - Information for Employees

Each week in Connections we’ll include some information to help employees better understand where we are headed with our 325 System for primary and supplementary routes.

Isn’t the reason MoDOT’s in this position is because they borrowed too much money?

After passing in 2004, Amendment 3 required the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to sell bonds in an effort to vastly improve the condition of our roads and bridges. Bonding allowed the department



to accelerate construction projects and get a lot of work done quickly. It allowed us to bring our roads and bridges up to the condition they're in now. It allowed us to make improvements that increased safety and saved lives. It allowed us to complete work on many of the state's four-lane highway corridors, improving connectivity for commerce. Bonding brought us the system we have today.

By doing all that work so fast, the department stayed ahead of inflation and saved Missouri taxpayers money in the long run. Now it's time to pay back the debt. For a more detailed look at Amendment 3 and bonding, you can read the full report at this web address: www.modot.org/toughchoicesahead/bonding-faq.htm.

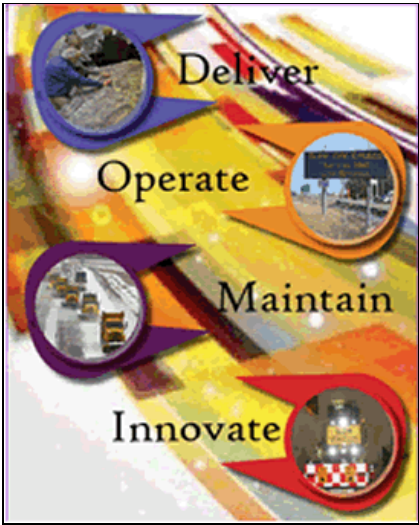
Will we make more staff reductions?

In 2011, the Bolder Five Year Direction reduced staff, facilities and equipment. We've cut costs through innovation and technology. We made those cuts so we would be ready to work at the reduced funding level. We are staffed at level to provide a good level of emergency operations and winter operations. Our current staffing level is the right size to provide the services to customers that they expect. We do not plan on making any additional staffing reductions.

2015 DOMInno and Innovations Challenge Showcase Schedule

The 2015 Innovations Challenge Showcase and DOMInno (Deliver, Operate, Maintain and Innovate) meeting will be held on April 28-30 at the University Plaza Hotel and Convention Center in Springfield.

A draft timeline of the event:



- Monday, April 27**
10 am - 4 pm: Innovations Challenge Showcase set-up and Judging
- Tuesday, April 28**
Innovations Challenge Showcase and DOMInno Meeting
8:30 am -12 pm: Innovations Challenge Expo Hall
12 pm - 1:30 pm: Lunch in the Expo Hall (provided)
2 pm - 5 pm: DOMInno Opening General Session (combined)
- Wednesday, April 29**
General Sessions and Breakout Sessions
8 am -10 am: Separate General Sessions
10 am -11:30 am: Breakouts Sessions
11:30 am - 1:00 pm: Lunch (provided)
1 pm - 5 pm: Breakout Sessions
- Thursday, April 30**
Closing General Session
7:30 am - 9:30 am: General Session (combined)
9:30 am -11:30 am: General Session (motivational speaker)
11:30 am: Adjourn

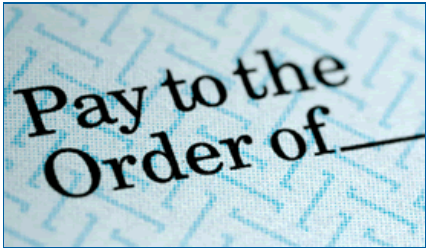
Buckle Up This Valentine's Day



Fatality Update



What's Happening



Pay Day
Since Feb. 15 falls on a Sunday and Feb. 16 is a banking holiday, state pay day will be Tues., Feb. 17.

Tracker Documents Available
The January Tracker and Supplement are ready for review on SharePoint - Tracker.



The statewide Tracker meeting to be held on Feb. 18 will also include a discussion on Tracker Focal Point, relating to work zone safety.

2015 marks the 10 year anniversary of Tracker. See the related article on the anniversary above.



Deferred Comp Update

February’s deferred comp video highlights America Saves Week, which runs from Feb. 23 to 28. It’s a national event promoting good savings habits among Americans.

Employees are encouraged to take advantage of this annual event by assessing your savings situation. If taking a serious look at your savings habits sounds a little scary, don't worry, they're here to help. Watch the video to learn more – [Feb. Deferred Comp Update](#).



Aeronautical Charts Available

Missouri’s latest aeronautical chart is now available to pilots and other aviation enthusiasts. The 2015-2016 Missouri Aeronautical Chart is produced by MoDOT as a planning tool for pilots and users of Missouri’s aviation system. It is available at no charge.

Standard features include airport and navigation data, communication frequencies, a guide to airfield signs and airspace classification, and an air mileage chart and an updated listing of all aviation weather reporting stations in the state, their frequencies and phone numbers. The map is printed on synthetic paper, which increases durability. Funding to produce the chart comes from aviation fuel taxes through the State Aviation Trust Fund.

Charts are available at most local airports in Missouri, online [aeronautical charts](#), by contacting MoDOT’s customer service center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (888-275-6636), via e-mail at aviation@modot.mo.gov or by writing to MoDOT’s Aviation Section, P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

February Service Anniversaries

30 Years

Glen P. Petersen - SL
William C. Fuller - SW
Todd J. Thieret - SE
Elizabeth Ann Wright - CO

25 Years

Patrick W. Luebrecht - NE
Michael W. Belt - CD
Todd A. Roberts - SW
Lynn Raymond Lewis - SE
Terry Mark Ross - SE

20 Years

John Henry Stumberg - SL
Jeffrey A. Bohler - SL
Karen Lynn Jennings - SW
Darren S. Thurston - SE
Sandra K. Riley - CO
Michele A. Atkinson - CO
Deborah Ann Barrett - CO
Brenda K. Harris - CO
Tammy S. Wallace - CO

15 Years

Richard K. Meyer - NW
Jeffery W. Kroner - NE
Gale E. March - NE
Aaron Ray Magruder - NE
Stacy Wade Thomas - NE
Clem Anderson - KC
Frank O. Miller - SW
Shannon D. F. Johnson - SW
John W. King - SE
Ryan Dale Miller - SE
Paul L. Keena - SE
Donnetta Ann Cole - CO
Eric George Bernskoetter - CO

10 Years

Travis D. Jenkins - NW
Micheal D. Maynard - KC
Jeffery Paul Baird - SL
Melissa Nicole Kreisel - SL
Marcus D. Parsons - SW
Patrick J. Mettlach - SW
Tyler G. Goodwyn - SW

10 Years Continued

Chad A. Mays - SW
Robert D. Owens - SW
Donna Rene Petrich - SE
Kevin M. Thoenen - CO
Elizabeth R. Ring - CO

5 Years

Kevin C. Burditt - SL
Kevin Ralph James Peters - SL
Gary Joseph Lair - CO

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Central Office

February Health and Safety Tips *Cold Weather Survival*

Although January is typically the coldest month in Missouri, February can also see the thermometer dipping down to the single digits and below. Prolonged exposure to low temperatures, wind and moisture can result in frostbite and hypothermia. Here are some suggestions on staying safe in winter weather.

How to Keep Warm

- Wear several layers of clothing - choose a coat with wind and waterproof layers.
- Wear a hat, scarf and turtleneck sweater - the head and neck lose heat faster than any other part of the body, and cheeks, ears and nose are the most prone to frostbite.

Frostbite - What to Look For

- The extent of frostbite is difficult to judge until hours later.
- Superficial frostbite is characterized by white, waxy or grayish-yellow patches on the affected areas. The skin feels cold and numb. The skin surface feels stiff and tissue feels soft when depressed.
- Deep frostbite is characterized by waxy and pale skin. The affected parts feel cold, hard, and solid and cannot be depressed. Large blisters may appear after re-warming.

Frostbite - What to Do

- Get the victim out of the cold and to a warm place immediately.
- Remove any constrictive clothing items and jewelry that could impair circulation.
- Seek medical attention immediately.

Hypothermia - What to Look For

- Hypothermia occurs when the body loses more heat than it produces.
- Symptoms include a change in mental status, uncontrollable shivering, a cool abdomen and a low core body temperature.
- Severe hypothermia may cause rigid muscles, dark and puffy skin, irregular heartbeat and respiration, and unconsciousness.

Hypothermia - What to Do

- Get the victim out of the cold.
- Lay the victim flat and add insulation such as blankets, pillows, towels or newspapers beneath and around the victim.
- Seek medical attention immediately.

Be Prepared

- Hypothermia and frostbite happen most frequently when you aren't prepared.
- Protect yourself with the proper clothing and take breaks in a warm environment.



February is Heart Month



Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the U.S. Often called the “silent killer,” heart disease has no visible signs or symptoms to alert you that something’s wrong. The good news is that heart disease is preventable and controllable. The term “heart disease” refers to several types of heart conditions, including high blood pressure. Read all about taking care of your heart in the month’s newsletter from Coventry – [February Wellness Newsletter](#).

Central Office Happenings



Mee Zone Event

From Tiny Seeds: Growing Your Own Veggies and Flowers

Feb. 24 – 2 to 3 p.m.

By Scott Marion, director of Motor Carrier Services
HR Training Room B, 601 West Main
or from anywhere via video conference

Thinking about starting a garden? Have a garden but want to get a few tips on starting seeds? Sign up for this class led by Motor Carrier Services Director, Scott Marion. Scott is a Certified Master Gardener and Instructor for the certification classes.

Space is limited for the in-person class at Central Office, so check with your supervisor, then sign up through the [LMS Student Center](#). For video conferencing contact Amanda Henley at (573) 526-5617.



Co-Ed Indoor Volleyball Tournament

Saturday, March 28

There are still team openings for the first annual MoDOT Co-Ed Indoor Volleyball Tournament. You must have your rosters in by Feb. 27. Submit rosters to Amanda Henley - amanda.henley@modot.mo.gov.

See flier for more information - [Co-Ed Volleyball Tournament. Volleyball Roster](#).

Upcoming Blood Drive Opportunities in Jefferson City

March 17 - Truman Building
March 18 - Truman Building



March 20 - St. Joseph's Cathedral
March 24 - Truman Building

Watch for more details soon.

Connections

The mission of Connections is to be a source of Missouri Department of Transportation news and feature articles that connect employees statewide.

Customer Relations - MoDOT
P.O. Box 270, Jefferson City, MO 65102
573.751.2840 / www.modot.org

Editor: Tammy Wallace

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

Mission

Our mission is to provide a world-class transportation experience that delights our customers and promotes a prosperous Missouri.

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Northwest District

Employee Assistance Auction



The Northwest District Employee Advisory Extension Council sponsored the second annual gift basket silent auction to benefit our Employee Assistance Fund. Seventeen baskets were donated by different departments and buildings across the district with Matt Sonner and Dee Culver coordinating the incoming bids and SharePoint site. Over \$1,600 in items were donated.

The council's goal was to beat last year's amount raised, which was \$1,300. Due to winter weather, and in an effort to allow all employees the opportunity to bid, the auction was extended through 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 10. At the end of the auction, \$1,445 was raised to help employees in our district who are facing various types of hardships throughout the year, handily beating last year's total.

Thanks to all who participated and congratulations to all the auction winners!

If you know a Northwest District family that could benefit from the Employee Assistance Fund, please contact a NW EAEC member.

Pop Tabs Add Up For Charity

MoDOT continues to be the leader among all state agencies in our charitable giving. Each employee is given the opportunity to donate directly from their paycheck each year, but there are other ways to give as well. It doesn't take much. As the Ronald McDonald House Charities' website states, "Even little things make a big difference."

Area Engineer Tonya Lohman has spearheaded the Northwest District's Charitable Campaign for a few years, and this year she challenged each maintenance building, RE office and floor at the district office to collect pop tabs to donate to RMHC.

Why pop tabs? RMHC recycles the pop tabs for cash. Pop tabs are pure aluminum, unlike the whole can which has paint and other residue. The local recycling company they use, Advantage Metals, also gives a considerable contribution, making the income from the pop tabs pure profit. RMHC then uses those profits to provide a place for families to stay while their children are in the hospital.

The Brookfield Maintenance Facility and the lower level of the garage building at the district office were the winners of the pop tab collection drive. They were rewarded with their choice of either doughnuts and orange juice or cake and ice cream.

As a district, more than 52 pounds of tabs were collected. According to the RMHC website, one pound is 1,267 tabs, so the Northwest District gave more than 66,000 tabs to the Ronald McDonald House Charities to help support their efforts!

Seeing Red



Ronald McDonald House Charities Outreach Manager Alan Lubert accepts 52 pounds of pop tabs from Baby Bob and Area Engineer Tonya Lohman.



Several Northwest District employees showed their support for women's heart health by wearing red on Friday, Feb. 6, as part of the American Heart Association's Go Red For Women Campaign.

Back Row L-R: David Oliver, Barry Booth, Russ O'Daniell, Greg Anderson
On Stairs L-R: Megan Atha, Norma Wood, Tammy Childress, Shelly Aebersold, Lana Allen, Kathy Tripp, Steve Frank, Josshe Palm

For more info

Marcia Johnson
Customer Relations Specialist
Northwest District
816.387.2495
Marcia.Johnson@modot.mo.gov

3602 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506-1399

Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Northeast District

How Highway Expansion Affected a Family

Amy Crawford, MoDOT area engineer, her siblings and her mom and dad, made their family home along U.S. 36 in Shelby County near Lentner. When Amy was 15 years old, tragedy struck their family when her father was killed in an automobile accident. When Amy's mother remarried some years later, she decided to sell the property along U.S. 36 and move to the country. New tenants would take over the property, but what happened a few years later would send Amy on a journey back into her family history.

U.S. 36 was planned to become a four-lane highway from Macon to Hannibal.

"I received a call that I, along with my brother and sister, needed to come and sign some papers from when mom sold the property," Amy said.

The property was being purchased by the state from the new owners to aid in the expansion of the new highway, and some loose ends needed to be taken care of that had not been done during the original sale.

"I was amazed at what was shown to me that day," said Amy.

The right-of-way department had located a copy of the check that had been paid to Amy's great-grandparents and grandparents (on her father's side) in 1956 for the purchase of part of their property for the building of the original lanes of U.S. 36.

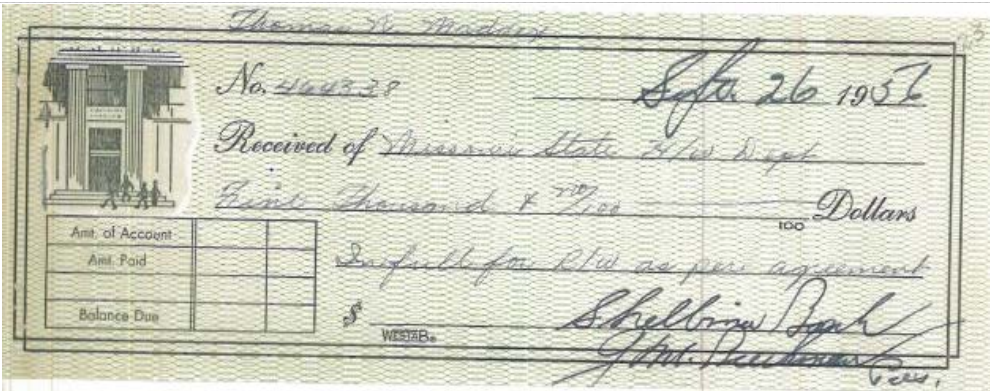
"Here we were expanding the highway, and I was able to see the purchase for the original right-of way on U.S. 36," she added.

Amy's great-grandparents and grandparents owned and operated a service station in the area. When U.S. 36 was originally built, Amy's family sold a portion of their land to the state for right-of-way in the building of the original lanes of U.S. 36, and moved the station to the other end of the property. The right of way was purchased for \$5,000. This property would later be the place Amy and her family would make their home.

"It was so interesting to get a glimpse into the past and see how the development of transportation in our area had touched so many lives in my family," she added. "Seeing that check, and where it all began for U.S. 36 near Lentner is something I will never forget."



Pictured above is the house and service station that belonged to Thomas and Carrie Maddex and Ernest and Theresa Maddex at Lentner in 1956.



Although the copy of the check could not be located, pictured above is a copy of the receipt showing the payment made to the Maddex family for their property.

Students and Seatbelt Safety!



The results are in for the 2014 Battle of the Belt competition! The Northeast District has 41 schools, 28 of those registered for the competition, and 19 schools actively participated and completed the program. We thank them for their hard work and dedicated efforts to keep teen drivers safe and make the Battle of the Belt program so successful!

Congratulations to the winning schools with above 90% seat belt usage.

Highest Overall \$500 and Gold Banner - Atlanta High School - 100% seat belt usage
Most Improved \$500 and Gold Banner - Palmyra High School - 55.26% improvement and 99.08% usage

Silver Banner - Wellsville High School - 97.50% usage
Silver Banner - Mark Twain High School - 96.67% usage
Silver Banner - Scotland County High School - 96.33% usage
Bronze Banner - Highland High School - 94.79% usage
Bronze Banner - Marion County High School - 93.48% usage
Bronze Banner - Paris High School - 92.31% usage
Bronze Banner - South Shelby High School - 91.07% usage

Awards ceremonies have begun taking place with the winning schools during local basketball games. The winning schools are required to use the money to further traffic safety efforts in the schools or communities. The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety in conjunction with American Family Insurance, the Missouri Emergency Nurses Association and the Missouri College of Emergency Physicians sponsor the program.

We hope the competition has instilled a good habit of encouraging our young drivers and passengers to use their seat belts. The ultimate winners are those who wear their seat belts every time they get into a vehicle.

Around the District...



Ed Hassinger visited the district on January 29. Pictured here is the employee meeting that was held at the district office in Hannibal.



This message board was stolen in Lincoln County. It was later recovered in a field, but had several parts taken off of it.



Troy Maintenance repaired a bridge railing on Route J in Lincoln County that had been damaged due to a traffic accident.



Richard Ragan, a Monroe City resident, enjoys making snow statues. Here he is seen with Olaf, which he made after the last snow event.



Marisa Christy-Kerns and Heather Buchanan, both of the NE Coalition for Roadway Safety, attended the Chart Teen Task Force event held on Feb. 7 in Hannibal.

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MoDOT Interchange at Liberty Wins Award

MoDOT’s \$11 million interchange reconstruction project at I-35 and Route 291 near Liberty received the Engineering Excellence Award in the American Council of Engineering Companies competition.

The award was handed out Saturday, Feb. 7, at the ACEC’s awards reception and banquet at the Westin Kansas City hotel. The collaborative project involved MoDOT, Kansas City, Liberty, FHWA, TranSystems and Clarkson Construction Co.

Design improvements replaced an existing bridge with a wider bridge with more lanes, a shared-use path for bicyclists and pedestrians, and improved ramp configuration and capacity.



The project is meeting its goals of reducing traffic congestion, improve traffic flow and accommodate pedestrians in an area where an interstate and major state highway converge with busy outer roads in a commercially dense crossroads. The curving interstate and highway added geometric challenges already complicated by limited right of way and the need to accommodate active businesses in the construction zone.

MoDOT Resident Engineer Brian Burger’s team and Transportation Project Manager Mark Fisher were honored as key players in the project.

The I-35 and Route 291 project also has been submitted as an entry in the 2015 American Public Works Association Project of the Year Awards in the Transportation Division.

To learn more about this project, [visit the project website](#).

Motorist Assist Lends a Helping Hand

As part of an ongoing series on MoDOT employees, we’re wrapping up our Motorist Assist -- or Emergency Response Operator -- profiles with a video "Day in the Life."

There are 14 operators in the department, which also includes an Incident Management Coordinator and an Operations Supervisor.

In addition to helping thousands of stranded motorists a year, the operators lends support to emergency response providers whenever there’s a crash on the road. Motorist Assist will help make sure there isn’t a secondary crash and help keep traffic congestion to a minimum following an incident.

No matter what time of day someone becomes stranded or involved in a crash, you can rest assured someone from Motorist Assist is just around the bend.

Click [here](#) to watch a video. Click [here](#) to learn more about operators.



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Central District

Route 50 / 63 Work Completed Successfully

The removal of two bridges in Jefferson City, which resulted in a full closure of U.S. Routes 50/63 (Rex Whitton Expressway), went "extremely smoothly" according to District Construction and Materials Manager Patty Lemongelli.

Construction crews completed work to remove the Chestnut Street and Jackson Street bridges about eight hours earlier than expected. The two bridges were removed to clear the way for a third lane to be added in both directions on the Expressway. The Chestnut Street overpass is scheduled to be replaced in June, while the Jackson Street overpass won't be completed until Aug. 2016.

The bridge demolition project is a part of the larger Lafayette Interchange Project. This project includes building a new interchange at U.S. Route 50 and Lafayette Street; adding a lane in each direction on the Whitton Expressway from Monroe Street to Lafayette Street and from Lafayette to Clark Avenue; and rehabilitating, replacing or constructing six bridges along the corridor.

The demolition work on the bridges created nearly 2,000 tons of material that had to be hauled away:

- 3,758,400 pounds of concrete
- 173,800 pounds of reinforcing steel
- 6,920 pounds of structural steel

A total of 1,969.56 tons will be recycled.

Many had a hand in helping pull off the Route 50/63 closure without any major issues and many helped the project get completed early. Special thanks goes out to District Construction and Materials Manager Patty Lemongelli, Resident Engineer Terry Imhoff, Intermediate Construction Technician Robert Merson and Senior Construction Inspectors Cary Armour and Derek Lepper.



These are photos of day and night demolition work on the Chestnut Street bridge over Route 50 during the weekend of Feb. 6 in Jefferson City. The demolition work is part of the Lafayette Interchange Project.

Gasconade River Bridge Remains Closed

The Interstate 44 outer road bridge over the Gasconade River near Hazelgreen will remain closed indefinitely due to a lack of funding to repair the bridge or build a new one.

MoDOT closed the bridge Dec. 18 after an inspection determined the bridge was unsafe for travel. Since then, MoDOT bridge engineers have been busy inspecting the bridge and developing cost estimates to either repair the bridge or build a new one at the same location.



“The repairs needed to reopen the bridge to traffic are much more extensive and expensive than we anticipated,” said David Silvester, MoDOT’s Central District engineer. “At a minimum, it would cost more than \$1 million to repair the current bridge, and then it could only carry limited weight loads. That’s money we just don’t have in our budget right now and don’t expect to have anytime in the near future.”

The least-cost option to open the bridge to traffic would involve MoDOT crews performing the repair work at an estimated cost of up to \$1.5 million depending on how long the work would take, which could be up to 11 months.

Even if the department had the money to spend on repairing the bridge, Silvester said, the structure would still have a bad deck and be limited to carrying loads of 20 tons or less, meaning tractor trailers would be prohibited from crossing the bridge.

“That would be a problem given that this bridge is located on the route we use to detour traffic off of I-44 when there’s an incident,” Silvester said. “The I-44 corridor carries a lot of truck traffic.”

In addition, pulling MoDOT crews from other jobs to fix the bridge would mean about 100 bridges in the central district would go without any maintenance or repairs over the 11-month period.

MoDOT officials looked at other options to fix the 90-year-old bridge, but the costs for those were even higher. For example, the price to build a new bridge at the location would be roughly \$4 million to \$4.5 million.

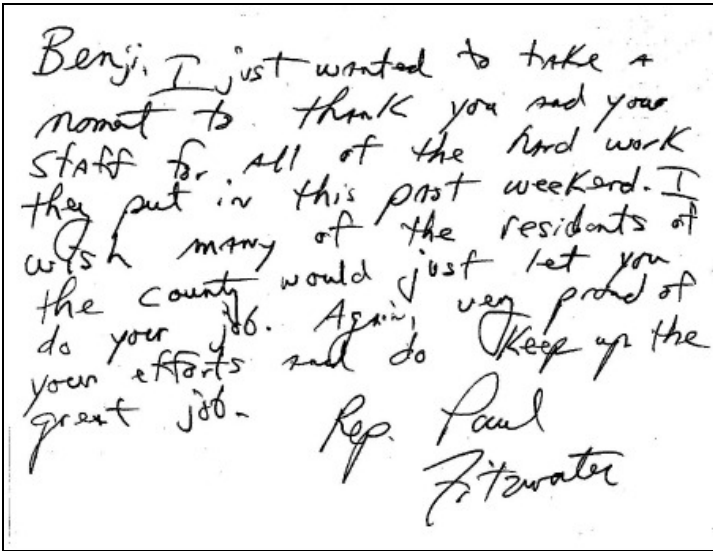
Legislator Thanks Potosi Maintenance

State Representative Paul Fitzwater recently sent the Potosi maintenance building a thank you card for all of their hard work and service to the citizens of Missouri.

The card addressed to Potosi Maintenance Supervisor Benji Wharton read:

*Dear Benji,
I just wanted to take a moment to thank you and your staff for all of the hard work they put in this past weekend. I wish many of the residents of the county would just let you do your job. Again, very proud of your efforts and do keep up the great job.*

We’d like to join Rep. Fitzwater in thanking the Potosi workers, as well as all MoDOT employees for their hard work and service.



Around the District

Members of the Central District’s Traffic Division attend training on Monday, Feb. 2 at the district office. The training was being conducted by



Rhythm Engineering to show employees how to use the InSync traffic system. The adaptive signal system is currently being used as a part of the Route 740 (Stadium Boulevard) diverging diamond interchange in Columbia.

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Comments & Suggestions

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Turning 85 Has Its Perks

Last week MoDOT’s oldest employee, Shirley Norris, arrived at work to receive the surprise of a lifetime on her 85th birthday. Her office was full of 85 bags of Cheetos, her favorite snack.

Anybody that works with Norris knows that her day is not complete without a bag of Cheetos. When it came time to put together an 85th birthday celebration, the St. Louis Regional Counsel department knew exactly what kind of gift would make her day extra special.

The plan consisted of luring Norris out of her office on the morning of Feb. 4 long enough to sneak in the bags of Cheetos. Some of her colleagues asked her to meet with them for a conference about upcoming projects while others filled her office up with the bags of Cheetos.

The look on Norris’ face as she reentered her office was one of true amazement.

“How awesome is that to receive something that I love in bulk on my birthday. I’m stocked up now until April, unless I share. I’m struggling with the thought of sharing,” joked Norris. “It was a really creative idea and it truly made this birthday one that I will never forget.”



Shirley Norris sits in her office with 85 bags of Cheetos on her 85th Birthday Feb. 4.

Saint Louis District Chili Cook-Off a Success

Last month the St. Louis Fit 4 Life team raised more than \$80 through a chili cook-off held at the district office. The funds raised will go towards quarterly incentives for Healthy Lifestyle Challenge winners.



SL district employees taste and compare different types of Chili recipes and get the chance to vote for their favorite.

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Southwest District

Southwest District at Work



EXPLAINING THE PLAN – Springfield Highway Designer Bethanie Kennicott (left) talks to a woman at a public meeting in Aurora about a railroad enhancement project. (Photo /Angela Eden)



DRAIN PIPE REPLACEMENT – Nevada Maintenance Worker Reid McCord secures a chain to a backhoe to move a drain pipe into position on Route M west of Schell City. (Photo /David Mitchell)



IMPROVING THE FLOW – Neosho Intermediate Maintenance Worker Stephen Bradley dumps a load of rock during a ditch repair project on Route CC near Goodman. (Photo /David Mitchell)



NEXT SLIDE, PLEASE – Central Office Intermediate Human Resources Specialist Ida Mitchell discusses employee utilization during a Southwest District Management Team Meeting. (Photo /David Mitchell)

Construction of New I-44 / 49 Interchange Scheduled to Begin Week of March 2

by David Mitchell

Construction on one of the last major projects in the Southwest District is set to begin March 2.

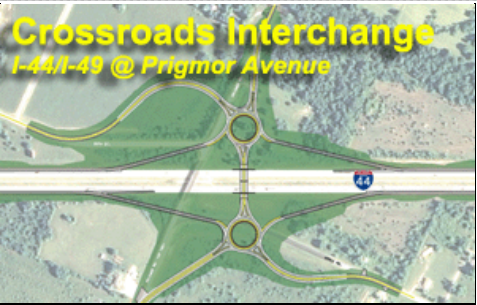
A new interchange at I-44/I-49 and Prigmor Avenue (Jasper County Road 190) near Joplin is part of a regional economic development effort.

The \$8.6 million project – known as the Crossroads Interchange –

features a new bridge over the interstate, replacing the current one at Prigmor Avenue, with single-lane roundabouts at either end of the bridge where ramps will carry traffic onto and off I-44/I-49 to the Crossroads Business and Distribution Park.

“This project was key to bringing Heartland Pet Foods to the Joplin area and its 150 new jobs,” said Assistant District Engineer Dan Salisbury.

Heartland, which makes Blue Buffalo dog and cat food, opened its \$90 million manufacturing plant in Joplin’s Crossroads Business and Distribution Park in Aug. 2014.



The interchange will be east of Exit 11 on I-44/I-49 (where I-49 splits off from I-44 and turns south toward Arkansas) and will provide direct access to the industrial park.

“This is the last significant project in the Joplin area for a while (because of MoDOT’s budget situation),” said Salisbury. “There’s nothing else on the horizon.”

The interchange is a cost-share project between MoDOT, Jasper County and the City of Duenweg. Additional funding came from MoDOT economic development funds awarded to the City of Joplin. The Crossroad Business and Distribution Park also donated land for the project.

Completion of the Crossroads Interchange is expected by Nov. 1, 2015.

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Comments & Suggestions

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Southeast District

Chief Financial Officer Pays Southeast District a Visit

To honor Maintenance Superintendent Lawrence Schumer's 42 years of service with the Department, MoDOT's Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker, spoke to a group of nearly 50 employees in Jackson on Jan. 30.

"Working for MoDOT for 42 years has got to be some sort of record," Broeker told Schumer. "We thank you for your service and wish you the best with your upcoming retirement."

Broeker acknowledged the many changes MoDOT has undergone over the past 42 years and the Tough Choices that the Department now faces. She talked about the funding situation, how we have changed and how work for maintenance will increase over the coming years.



In late January, Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker stopped by the Jackson maintenance facility to wish Lawrence Schumer well as he prepares for retirement and to discuss the tough choices ahead with MoDOT's funding situation.

Following her address, Broeker fielded questions from maintenance crews. More than a dozen questions were asked regarding maintenance work, the Missouri State budget and how federal funding works.

"I've learned more about our budget today than I have since I started," said Josh Wessel, Maintenance Crew Leader, at the Jackson Shed. "The MoDOT budget is one thing, but working with the state and federal governments too makes the process much more complicated."

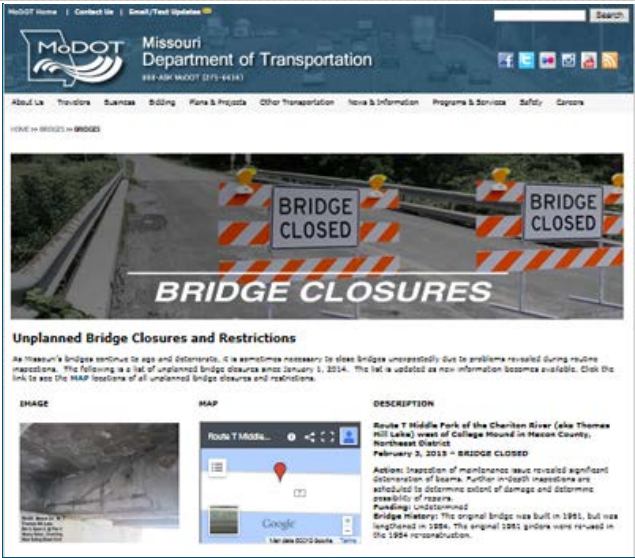
Broeker concluded the day by asking employees to help Missourians understand our process and why MoDOT needs more money. She also asked them to help educate Missourians on the Tough Choices ahead.

To learn more about Tough Choices go to: www.modot.org/toughchoicesahead.

Route 53 Bridge Project Awarded

A contract for the Route 53 bridge project in Campbell was awarded on Feb. 4, to the delight of the structure's 5,100 daily travelers. The bridge closed Aug. 20, 2014, after a routine bridge inspection found the nearly 80-year-old structure had shifted. The project helps illustrate MoDOT's ever shrinking construction budget.

"Safety is MoDOT's highest priority, so the bridge closure was a necessary precaution" explained District Engineer Mark Shelton. Unfortunately, the stark reality is that this is not the only bridge in poor shape in our region or the



Unfortunately, the Route 53 bridge closure in Campbell is not an isolated incident. There have been multiple unplanned bridge closures across the state. To learn more, visit www.modot.org/Bridges or click the screenshot above.

Missouri's 34,000-mile system," he said. "With the seventh largest highway system in the nation and funding that maintains less than one-fourth of our roadways, travelers can expect to see changes."

The remaining miles of Missouri's highway system will only receive treatment from MoDOT's maintenance forces, such as pothole repairs.

"Our roadways will begin to deteriorate, and some bridges could be closed indefinitely," said Shelton.

state. Bridges get older every day, and in this instance, we had to reprioritize projects for the replacement of this structure."

He explained several projects originally scheduled for 2014 in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) had to be pushed back to 2016 or beyond.

"We have programmed to make the best use of taxpayers' dollars, and there isn't funding for unplanned projects like this," said Shelton.

In addition, it is likely these types of closures will become more commonplace as MoDOT's budget continues to decline. By 2017, MoDOT's funding will drop to approximately \$325 million, which is not even enough to maintain the existing roadways and bridges.

"We will be able to maintain 8,000 miles of Missouri's 34,000-mile system," he said. "With the seventh largest highway system in the nation and funding that maintains less than one-fourth of our roadways, travelers can expect to see changes."

For more info

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